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SHERBORNE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

R E P O R T

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

to the

SHERBORNE RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY.

for the Year

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STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

AREA (acres)	41,481
POPULATION (Registrar General's estimate Midsmr.1937)	5,052
Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1937	1,540
Rateable value	£20,425
Sum represented by a penny rate	£92

The area is an agricultural one and the population is mainly employed in agricultural pursuits, especially dairy farming, there being 262 registered dairies in the area.

Gloving is carried out by many of the inhabitants and the increased prosperity in this industry is reflected in increased comforts in their homes.

Unemployment continues to decrease in the district.

VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

	Total.	M.	F.	Rate per 1000.
Live Births (Legitimate	63	33	30)	12·86
(Illegitimate	2	2	-)	
Still Births	5	2	3	13·85
Deaths	64	38	26	12·66

Deaths from puerperal causes:-

Puerperal sepsis	Nil.
Other puerperal causes	Nil.
	Nil.

Death rate of infants under one year of age

All infants per 1,000 live births	76·92
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births	79·36
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births	Nil.
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	6
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	Nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	Nil.

There was little sickness in the district during the past year. There was no large epidemic of influenza, such cases being few and mild in character. The health and physique of the inhabitants is noticeably good.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

The Public Health Officers of the Local Authority comprise:-

(a) A part-time Medical Officer of Health, G.R.Rickett, M.D.
(b) A whole time Sanitary Inspector, K.R.Blackmore (Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspectors Joint Board).
(c) Sanitary Inspector's Assistant, R.H.Marsh.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The laboratory facilities provided continue to be satisfactory. Our Authority pay for the necessary investigations and is willing to incur expense whenever considered necessary on the grounds of Public Health or any other individual case of extreme hardship.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

The Ambulance facilities provided are satisfactory. For infectious disease the Council itself undertakes removal. The Ambulance is promptly available whenever wanted and no delay of removal has ever occurred.

The Council might well consider the question of making an annual contribution towards the cost of upkeep of the ambulance provided by the British Red Cross Society for the removal of other cases of disease.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

Nursing in the home continues entirely satisfactory. Villages or groups of villages have a nurse usually equipped with a motor car. The nurse has now sufficient time for her cases. There are no complaints of the sick wanting sufficient care and attention. The local Hospital League provides on loan nursing equipment and utensils.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS.

There are no treatment or clinic centres in the district.

HOSPITALS.

There are no public hospitals in the district but the Yeatman Hospital serves this Rural area. The local Hospital League annually commented on in these Reports is still increasing, there no being over 7,600 Members.

The infectious diseases arising in this area are treated by arrangement with the Urban District Council in the latter's hospital. There is sufficient accommodation and no delay in admission.

There were only six cases of notifiable diseases in the district last year and of whom only one needed hospital treatment.

The provisional arrangement with the Shaftesbury Rural District Council for the treatment of small pox when it arises in this neighbourhood still holds.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supplies.

No fresh water supplies have been provided during the past year.

Water Supplies (Continued).

Thornford Water Supply.

The condition of the water supply at Thornford causes some anxiety as it is intended to build six new houses under the Council's scheme in this Parish. It is certain that the present water supply will not be sufficient to provide for any increase in a number of houses and the Council will be faced during this year for making further arrangements to provide satisfactory water supply.

Bradford Abbas Water Supply.

The condition of the water supply at Bradford Abbas demands more consideration although there is a sufficient water supply for this parish from wells yet the water in the past has, from time to time, been found unsatisfactory and in recent years one epidemic was traced to the water supply. Further building in this village is being contemplated and these cottages will have to be supplied with water. Preliminary investigations have shown that a supply of water, ample amount and pure in quality, can be provided at reasonable cost. The Council should, therefore, consider whether it would not be wise to arrange a well-planned supply for the whole of this village. The use of the present unsatisfactory and shallow wells could then be discontinued. Furthermore, it might be wise to so plan the supply that the needs of Over and Nether Compton and Trent could all be satisfied from the same source. The supply of these villages, though not deficient, has the defect that they are derived from private sources to which the Council have not ready access and over which it has no adequate control.

Oborne Water Supply.

There is still shortage of water supply in the Parish of Oborne. Some houses on the main road have at present no supply. The Council would be well advised to make some joint scheme with the present owners of the water, viz: The Dorset County Council, so that a full supply can be granted to the whole of the village. The present contemplated scheme is bad in that it does not supply the whole needs of the village.

Southern Parishes Scheme.

For the remaining Southern Parishes commented on in last year's Report a water supply is now within sight. The schemes have been approved and finally only a few legal details remain to be completed before the work is commenced.

Should the schemes detailed above be approved and completed it could be said that the whole of the water supply in this district would be sufficient and wholesome.

As to the existing schemes the water is satisfactory in quantity. As to its quality, 7 bacteriological examinations have been made in the past year. Chemical analyses being furnished at the same time. All these reports have been satisfactory in all respects. Full analyses is being made every three months.

DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

There is still much to be done with drainage and sewerage in this area.

In Bradford Abbas sewage still continues to run down the ditches into the streams open and untreated. So far no steps have been taken to deal with this nuisance.

In Thornford where similar things exist, although not to such an objectionable degree, a scheme has been prepared and it is probable within a few months the work will be done. It is noted that delay in this matter has been caused by the Parish Council of Thornford being unable to make up its mind as to its requirements.

In Trent nothing has yet been done to meet the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in this village.

In Yetminster and Chetnole nothing has been done but the conditions in Chetnole are getting so much worse the Council should take some steps to remedy the unpleasant conditions. When the Council decide to deal with the Chetnole nuisance it will be probably be found advisable to combine in the scheme an adequate scheme for Yetminster.

In Poyntington for some years trouble has been caused through flood attributable to the heavy rain fall due to the flood water entering the main sewer. A scheme is being prepared to remedy this defect and to exclude rain water from the sewer.

In Long Burton the conditions are still unsatisfactory. Some time ago a sewer was relaid by this Council connecting with a flood water drain owned by the Dorset County Council. This sewer is untrapped opposite several houses and nuisance still occurs through the contents of this sewer opening untreated into the stream at the further end of the village. These defects should be remedied.

Another nuisance of a similar type persists in Over Compton where a mixture of this type contaminates the small stream where cattle drink.

RIVERS & STREAMS.

Apart from the instance given above there is no gross pollution of rivers or streams in this district.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Slowly but surely conversions of pail closets to water closets are taking place. It is satisfactory to note here that in all the new Council houses the Council have determined to provide a piped water supply and in the future to insist on water closets and baths and during the past year the Council have converted 10 houses from pail closets to water closets.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The Council has so far done nothing to meet the problem of refuse collection. The most casual inspection of the villages shows dumps of old tins the disposal of which would undoubtedly be a costly matter but nevertheless as this nuisance is increasing with the greater use that the inhabitants make of tinned food some steps will have to be taken about it.

SANITARY INSPECTION.

The condition of the unsatisfactory Babylon Hill site is somewhat improved in that the two condemned bungalows have been removed. The remaining bungalow which is inhabited is not objectionable. The remaining buildings on this site are very poor and badly planned and it should be a matter os some consideration by the Council as to whether they might fitly become the subject of a Clearance Order. The nuisance of the Camping Ground is abated. The ground is no longer used for that purpose. Happily there have been no further cases of similar kind in the neighbourhood.

Continuing the administration of the 1935 Housing Act following the survey of unsatisfactory houses, Demolition Orders were made in 12 cases. Furthermore, 8 Clearance Orders were confirmed by the Minister involving 18 houses, thus in all 30 thoroughly unsatisfactory houses have been dealt with. It is doubtful still therefore how many cases of this sort remain to be dealt with. The most glaring defects have been dealt with but it is likely that a similar number will require action to be taken in the future. It seems likely that these demolitions will result in the Council having to provide yet another 40 or 50 houses but the matter still requires more careful investigation.

Some criticism, at times hasty and ill-informed, have been experienced of the destruction of old houses which at a casual and distant view look too romantic and picturesque to be sacrificed. Careful inspection of some of these ancient cottages show that they are damp and draughty and have nothing to meet the justifiable requirements for a healthy existence and are too dilapidated to attempt of any satisfactory repair. It is poor consolation to the inhabitants of such a damp, draughty and unwholesome dwelling in which he lives with his family afflicted by rheumatism or catarrhal diseases to reflect that his house is too picturesque to be either repaired or destroyed. On the other hand, every attempt has been made for years past to preserve the character and appearance of these old cottages and in doing the repairs that are necessary to be careful that they do not wantonly interfere with the appearance of the structure. In support of this I would mention that with this object in view the Council have retained, bought and are reconditioning the Old Leigh Poor houses which date from 1641. Since the passing of the 1931 Act about 30 houses have been preserved in this manner.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

During the past year a complaint was made from one village that a very aged inhabitant living in conditions of filfth and neglect which were hardly creditable. Investigation proved that she and her house were exceedingly verminous and that the absence of cleanliness of the most elementary type rendered the house to be a public nuisance. Following an order from a local Court she was removed to an Institution for personal cleansing and her house was disinfested by spraying and fumigation.

Most of the contents of the house were so verminous that they had to be destroyed, the consent of the relatives having previously been obtained.

SCHOOLS.

Three Schools have been thoroughly inspected this year and observation kept on the others. No serious epidemic occurred in any school. For minor complaints two schools have been thoroughly disinfected.

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year:-

(1)(a)	Total No. of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	107
(b)	No. of inspections made for the purpose	193
(2) (a)	No.of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations,1925	Nil.
(b)	No. of inspections made for the purpose.	Nil.

(3) No. of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation. 30

(4) No. of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation. 37

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices:-

No. of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers 12

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:-

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs 2

(2) No. of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:-

(a) By owners 2
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners Nil.

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied Nil.

(2) No. of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:-

(a) By owners Nil.
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners. Nil.

(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 30.

(2) No. of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders. Nil.

(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made Nil.

(2) No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit. Nil.

4. Housing Act, 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding.

(a)	(1) **No. of dwelling-houses overcrowded at the end of the year.**	**1**
	(2) No. of families dwelling therein	1
	(3) No. of persons dwelling therein	6
(b)	No. of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	1
(c)	(1) No. of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	Nil.
	(2) No. of persons concerned in such cases	Nil.
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	Nil.

5. Total No. of new houses erected during 1937	24
No. erected during 1937 with State Assistance	Nil.
(1) By Local Authority (36 houses commenced 18th Oct)	Nil.
(2) By other Bodies or Persons	Nil.
No. of Houses owned by Local Authority	40
Approximate No. of working class houses in District.	1473

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.

During the past year the Register of Dairies has been thoroughly overhauled so that now a complete record in sufficient detail of all the Dairies is available.

Of the grave defects which were outstanding at the beginning of the year there are now only two cases remaining and it is certain that both with regard to structure and cleanliness the conditions of dairies in this district are improving.

It is a matter of great regret that only one Dairy in this district supplies pasteurised milk considering the obvious dangers to the public of serious disease being conveyed by raw milk it is a pity that no more than one Dairy can be persuaded to supply pasteurised milk. Happily both the large public schools in Sherborne for Boys and Girls insist on pasteurised milk for their pupils and the Dairy which supplies them is very well kept. The milk from it has been tested frequently and no complaints have been found.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

The two Slaughterhouses in the district are regularly inspected and are well kept and the condition of food supply in the district is good and healthy

Carcases Inspected & Condemned.

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed	49	3	5	38	127
Number inspected	42	2	5	30	127
All diseases except Tuberculosis. Whole carcases condemned.	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	7	-	-	4	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis.	16·6	-	-	13·3	-
Tuberculosis only. Whole carcases condemned.	-	-	-	-	3
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	4	-	-	-	18
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	9·5	-	-	-	16·5

NUTRITION.

General observation of the children in the district shows they are well up to ordinary standards of health and nourishment.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

There has been very little infectious disease during the year, only six cases having been reported.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1937.

Disease.	Total Cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	1	1	-
Acute Pneumonia	2	Nil.	Nil.
Erysipelas	3	Nil.	Nil.

Analysis under age-groups.

	M.	F.	Total.
0-10	nil.	nil.	nil.
10-20	nil.	1.	1.
20-35	2.	2.	4.
35-45	nil.	nil.	nil.
45-65	nil.	2.	2.
65 and over	1.	nil.	1.
Totals	3.	5.	8.

CANCER.

There are no facilities in the area for diagnosis and treatment of Cancer, such cases being usually sent to the Yeatman Hospital, Sherborne, where they are appropriately dealt with. There is no difficulty in getting treatment by radium. The local Hospital League System defraying the expense.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

No special action has been taken for the prevention of blindness such hospital treatment as is available in the Yeatman Hospital meets the requirements of the district.

TUBERCULOSIS.

No action has had to be taken.

New Cases and Mortality during 1937.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-								
1-	1.		1.					
5-								
15-		1.		1.				
25-	1.	1.		1.				
35-								1.
45-	1.							
55-					1			
65 & upwards								
Totals.	3.	2.	1.	2.	1.			1.

(Signed)

G. R. RICKETT, M.D.

Medical Officer of Health,
Sherborne R.D.C.

LIBR.